

Spark Gap

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Country music artist Patty Loveless, KD4WUJ, is the honorary chairperson for the ARRL 2005 Toy Drive

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club



Mid-State Amateur Radio Club
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ARRL Partners with The Salvation Army in Holiday Toy Drive

NEWINGTON, CT, Oct 19, 2005—The ARRL and The Salvation Army (TSA) have partnered up for the 2005 ARRL Holiday Toy Drive. ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen

Pitts, W1AGP, the League's point man behind the effort to brighten the holidays for youngsters displaced or left homeless by the Gulf Coast hurricanes, points out that TSA's distribution network throughout the region remains intact. Additionally, Pitts says, the organization can screen recipients and ensure that the gifts go where they are truly needed the most. "We are asking hams from all over the country to begin gathering new toys and shipping them to Memphis, Tennessee," Pitts said this week. "ARRL Vice Director Henry Leggette, WD4Q, has secured a receiving warehouse and is coordinating ham-elves volunteering there." Toys go to: ARRL Toy Drive/The Salvation Army, 1775 Moriah Woods Blvd—Suite 12, Memphis, TN 38117-7125. There volunteers will sort and stock them. Early in December, the toys will be transported to Salvation Army facilities in hurricane areas that need help the most at that time. "We are making these arrangements to maximize the areas receiving aid, while still maintaining the drive's identity as the Amateur Radio community's response," Pitts said. National Toy Drive Chairperson and award-winning country music artist Patty Loveless, KD4WUJ, has joined with family and friends—including producer Richard Lubash, N1VXW—to make three videos promoting the drive. One is a 30 second public service announcement (PSA) for TV use, while the other two are intended for Web site placement or may even be sent as e-mail attachments, Pitts said.

Loveless says caring and helping are a big part of what ham radio is all about. "Those things are the major traits of our tradition," she said, "and we, as Amateur Radio operators and ARRL members, can continue the true spirit of that tradition by supporting this wonderful and much needed effort." The ARRL is asking Amateur Radio operators to put a QSL card into the box with their donated toys.

Pitts says many ham radio clubs already are gathering toys for this year's drive. "Please check with your local club and see if they are planning a

mass shipment," he suggested. "If not, perhaps you can help organize one for your area."

ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, noted that last year, hams from all over the country brought smiles to children during the holidays. "We made a lot of friends, and we did a lot of good," he said. "No one expected that we would need to do it again, but the recent hurricanes' destruc-

tion has changed the plans of a lot of people. I hope you will help in this effort to bring a smile to children hurt by these disasters."

Unwrapped new toys for boys and girls of ages 1 to 14 should be gathered and shipped to the Memphis facility between now and Thanksgiving for distribution over the holidays. Non-hams are also encouraged to join in this effort to provide for the thousands of children left homeless or displaced due to the Gulf Coast hurricanes.

Cash donations from ARRL members also are welcome to help cover such Toy Drive expenses as truck rentals and purchasing toys for special age groups. One particular need is for bicycles.

Send donations to: ARRL Toy Drive, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111.

Amateur Radio Responds as Storms Spawn Rash of Tornadoes

NEWINGTON, CT, Nov 17, 2005—Just weeks after assisting in hurricane relief efforts along the Gulf Coast and in Florida, Amateur Radio volunteers are responding in the wake of yet another weather emergency. Strong thunderstorms resulting from a



clash of cold and warm fronts in the nation's midsection spawned tornadoes in several states. The nearly three dozen twisters reported November 15 in Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, Illinois and Missouri came a little more than a week after tornadoes killed more than 20 people in Indiana and days after

another string hit Iowa, resulting in one death. Some 8000 customers were reported without electrical power in the five affected states, but Kentucky appears to have been the hardest hit. "Nets for SKYWARN were activated all across the affected areas," Kentucky Section Emergency Coordinator Ron Dodson, KA4MAP, reported November 16. "We also had the state EOC [emergency operations center] on the air on 3.993 MHz last night as we were trying to get emergency information into and out of the affected areas." Dodson told ARRL Headquarters that WX4NWS at the Louisville National Weather Service (NWS) office was active during the afternoon and evening of November 15 as forecasters tried to keep up with the rapidly developing weather.

"At times, warnings came faster than one could reset their SAME [Specific Area Message Encoder] Alert receivers!" Dodson said. "I know Paducah was also kept busy."

One person died in the Marshall County town of Benton, where a tornado did severe damage to a mobile home park. Upward of two dozen other people were hurt, Dodson added.

Kentucky Area 2 District Emergency Coordinator Nick Bailey, KG4URI, reports that a tornado ripped through the southern end of Madisonville. He estimated that up to 30 ARES and RACES volunteers deployed throughout Hopkins County.

"County communications were restored within 15 minutes of the storm," he reports. "We have a lot of damage but so far no fatalities."

On November 16, three ARES teams accompanied search-and-rescue (SAR) teams going door-to-

door. Each team was equipped with a handheld transceiver with APRS capability and GPS attached for tracking purposes. "Amateur radio provided mostly SAR communications as the police repeaters were still up," Bailey added.

He reports preliminary estimates of 35 to 40 homes severely damaged or destroyed in the Madisonville area and possibly 10 in Earlington. At least two dozen people were reported injured in Hopkins County, and the count was expected to rise. A confirmed touchdown also occurred in Sharps. Steve Morgan, W4NHO, an ARRL Great Lakes Division assistant director, reported a tornado was tracked from Dawson Spring through Owensboro and into southeastern Indiana. "I spoke with the deputy EMA director in Hopkins County, Frank Wright, KA4IGR," he said. "Amateur Radio is the only reliable communications they have at the moment due to power outages." Telephone service also was reported out in parts of Kentucky. Indiana's latest encounter with tornadoes was not nearly as severe as that of November 6. One person was reported killed in Hancock County after a car went out of control after running into water on the pavement.

Indiana SEC Dave Pifer, N9YNF, said the damage this time was largely "hit and miss" across the state. "I know the SKYWARN programs were hopping yesterday as we tracked the storms through the area," he said. "At one point they would only take tornado/funnel reports and significant damage reports because there was so much

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November Tornadoes

going on."

New MARC Members

It is with great pleasure we announce new members of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club.

K9JTC, Jason Carmichael
W9DEW, Don West

Welcome!

Amateur Radio Responds

(continued)

Illinois SM Shari Harlan, N9SH, says her section seems to have largely escaped the tornado outbreak. "It appears that while some straight line winds toppled some structures in the Wabash, Edwards and Lawrence county area, they escaped the afternoon round of storms," she said. She did note one report of definite rotational echoes, however.

Iowa SEC Jim Snapp, NA0R, said Amateur Radio volunteers responded after a series of eight tornadoes within a few hours hit central Iowa November 12. The twisters hit parts of eight counties, he said, and one person was killed.

"Homes, business and farmsteads were damaged or destroyed as the tornadoes rampaged through the Iowa countryside and in some small communities," he said. According to Snapp, K0DMX at the NWS Des Moines office started getting reports of hail and tornado activity around 3:45 PM CDT.

"Amateur reports as well as other sources of storm information enabled the NWS staff to send out updates to the storms activity and its path to the public," he said. A dozen hams contributed reports to the SKYWARN net, he said.

At one point, one storm appeared headed for Ames, the home of Iowa State University where some 40,000 spectators were on hand for a football game. They were evacuated as the NWS, with Amateur Radio assistance, monitored the situation. "An F0/F2 tornado did pass a few miles west of the stadium around 5 PM," Snapp said. "Patrons were allowed to return, and the game got underway about 45 minutes late."

ARRL Files Regulation-by-Bandwidth Petition with FCC

NEWINGTON, CT, Nov 15, 2005—The ARRL has formally asked the FCC to adopt the League's plan to segment the Amateur Radio bands solely by emission bandwidth rather than by mode. The *Petition for Rule Making*, filed November 14, recommends what the ARRL called "a shift in regulatory philosophy" that would encourage and facilitate the development and refinement of digital techniques and advanced technologies. At the same time, the League said, accommodating new technologies would not come at the expense of current operating modes, including double-sideband AM phone.

"This petition seeks for the Amateur Radio Service the flexibility to experiment with new digital transmission methods and types to be developed in the future," the League's petition said, "while permitting present operating modes to continue to be used for as long as there are radio amateurs who wish to use them." The ARRL said the changes it suggests will also update the FCC's rules and

eliminate the need for "cumbersome procedures" to determine whether a new digital mode is legal under Part 97.

The ARRL's regulation-by-bandwidth plan is far from a done deal. In order for it to be adopted, the FCC first must put the League's *Petition for Rule Making* on public notice and invite formal public comments. A subsequent *Notice of Proposed Rule Making* would kick off a further round of formal comments. Ultimately, the FCC would have to issue a *Report and Order* putting the changes into place and setting an effective date.

The League conceded that its regulation-by-bandwidth regime would place increased responsibility on the amateur community to establish workable, accepted band plans, but it expressed confidence that such an effort would be successful.

The petition filed this week has been in the works for some time now. The ARRL Board of Directors adopted the petition's guiding principle in 2002 and invited comments from the Amateur Radio community in the summer of 2004. It reflects expert input from the ARRL Ad Hoc HF Digital Committee as well as from ARRL staff. Comments from League members and an ARRL Executive Committee review led to further fine tuning.

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, discussed the subject of regulating by bandwidth in three "It Seems to Us . . ." *QST* editorials: "Regulation by Bandwidth" in September 2004, "Narrowing the Bandwidth Issues" in April 2005 and "Self Regulation" in October 2005.

In terms of specifics, the ARRL is asking the FCC to replace the table at §97.305(c) with a new one segmenting bands by bandwidths ranging from 200 Hz to 100 kHz (see table "Proposed Band Segments and Bandwidths"). Unaffected by the ARRL's recommendations, if they're adopted, would be 160 and 60 meters. Other bands below 29 MHz would be segmented into subbands allowing maximum emission bandwidths of 200, 500 or 3.5 kHz, with an exception for AM phone. The League's petition "seeks to facilitate and encourage the development, refinement and use of new digital technologies without the regulatory remnants developed at a time when the principal emissions used in the Amateur Radio Service were Morse telegraphy and single- or double-sideband amplitude-modulated telephony." Part 97 rules need to permit higher data rates between 1.8 and 450 MHz to encourage development of digital multimedia technology, "which has great promise for improving and fostering more effective emergency and disaster relief communications," the petition asserted. "This petition does not favor one mode at the expense of another," the ARRL concluded in urging FCC adoption. "It merely allows expansion of the repertoire of options that amateurs may pursue compatibly."

WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL
Tone

Weekly Net
Every Sunday
at 7PM EST

Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newsline!

Weekly Net

Make sure to check out our weekly net, held every Sunday at 1900 (7 PM) local time. This is a great chance to meet other local amateur radio operators and test your operating skills. Newline is often played, allowing net participants to get the latest news about the amateur radio hobby. For those without the license or means to check in over the air, we offer an email check-in. Just send an email with your name and contact information to netcontrol@midstatehams.org, and we will record your check-in!



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2005 Schedule of Events

Public Service Events and/or Educational/Testing Opportunities

NOVEMBER

19 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

19-20 **Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo**

Allen County War Memorial Coliseum and Exposition Center, Fort Wayne, IN
The Indianapolis Radio Club is offering a bus trip to the Hamfest for \$20 - admission price to the Hamfest is not included. See their website www.indyradioclub.org for more information.

26 **Evansville Hamfest**

Vanderburgh County 4-H Fairgrounds, Evansville, IN

DECEMBER

13 **Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**

Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN

17 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

JANUARY

10 **Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**

Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN

21 **MARC Meeting**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

Note: For most Indianapolis events, contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, to volunteer or for more information check out website, www.indyhams.org.

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.